



Montgomery County Council

From the office of Councilmembers Phil Andrews

For Immediate Release

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Statement by Councilmember Phil Andrews on the two-year anniversary of the County Smoke-free Restaurant law (that took effect Oct. 9, 2003)

“Since the County’s restaurant smoking ban took effect two years ago, restaurant patrons and employees have been able to breathe easy, knowing that the air is safe from hazardous second-hand smoke.

“At no cost to the public, the smoking ban in restaurants is fully accomplishing its purpose of protecting public and worker health.

“Montgomery County has not had to spend tax dollars enforcing the law because the public broadly supports the law, and violations are obvious and unaccepted by other patrons.

“Contrary to the predictions of some opponents of the law, Montgomery County’s restaurant industry continues to thrive. In the first twelve months after the law took effect (October 2003 – September 2004), sales tax revenues of county restaurants increased by 7.6% compared to the prior twelve months, according to data provided by all county restaurants to the Office of the Maryland Comptroller.

In addition, through the first three quarters of the second year (October, 2004 – June, 2005), sales tax revenues increased by 9% over the same nine months of the first year (again according to data filed with the Comptroller).

“As they consider adoption of smoke-free restaurant laws, lawmakers in the District of Columbia, Prince Georges County, and Annapolis can be confident that requiring smoke-free restaurants will provide essential protection for worker and public health without harming their restaurant industries.”

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